

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8052

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

UNCLAS PARIS 08156

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJECT: BIG MINH INTERVIEW

1. FOLLOWING IS OUR TRANSLATION OF FULL TEXT OF  
INTERVIEW WITH BIG MINH CARRIED BY APRIL 2 LE FIGARO.

Q. "CAN THE RESIDENT REMAIN?

A. "IN THE INTEREST OF THE NATION HE MUST WITHDRAW.  
EVERYONE IS ASKING FOR HIS DEPARTURE. A NEW GOVERNMENT  
MUST BE FORMED AND A SOLUTION TO THE VIETNAMESE PROBLEM  
ABSOLUTELY MUST BE FOUND.

Q. "A MILITARY SOLUTION?

R. "ABSOLUTELY NOT. IT MUST BE A POLITICAL AND  
HUMANITARIAN SOLUTION.

Q. "THAT IS TO SAY?

A. "THE INSTALLATION OF A GOVERNMENT COMPOSED OF NEW  
AND CORRECT MEN WHO WANT TO MAKE PEACE. THIEU CHOSE  
WAR; HE CANNOT SPEAK OF PEACE. AS SOON AS ANOTHER  
GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE BEEN PUT IN PLACE, 'THE OTHER SIDE'  
WILL HAVE NO REASON TO REFUSE TO RETURN TO THE  
CONFERENCE TABLE. I HAVE THE DISTINCT IMPRESSION THAT  
THE PRG JUST MADE A DECLARATION IN THIS SENSE IN PARIS.

"A CEASE-FIRE, A REAL CEASE-FIRE IS THE MOST URGENT  
THING. AFTERWARDS, THE REESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE WILL  
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HAVE TO BE DISCUSSED -- WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE

PARIS ACCORDS. CERTAINLY THERE ARE EQUIVOCAL POINTS IN THE ACCORDS AND PERHAPS EVEN SECRET AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND HANOI, ABOUT WHICH THE PRG HAS BEEN INFORMED, BUT THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH VIETNAM KNOW NOTHING. I FOR EXAMPLE KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THESE AGREEMENTS, BUT THEY COULD WELL EXIST.

Q. "WHAT SHOULD BE DONE FOR THE UNHAPPY PEOPLE HUDDLED TOGETHER IN DANANG AND FOR THOSE WHO ARE WANDERING ON THE ROADS?

A. "I JUST SPOKE TO YOU ABOUT A POLITICAL AND HUMANITARIAN SOLUTION: ABSOLUTE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE CEASE-FIRE. BUT IN THIS REGARD ALSO ONE MUST ACT VERY QUICKLY. I AM THINKING ESPECIALLY ABOUT THE DESPAIR OF ALL THE SEPARATED, TORN FAMILIES, ABOUT THOSE OF BAN ME THUOT, PLEIKU, KONTUM, HUE, DANANG AND ELSEWHERE. I AM THINKING ABOUT THE TENS OF THOUSANDS OF LOST CHILDREN WHO MUST BE RETURNED TO THEIR PARENTS.

Q. "WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE POLITICAL PROCESS BEGUN MARCH 15 BY SEVERAL PERSONALITIES NOT BELONGING TO THE GOVERNMENT TO MODIFY THE TEAM IN POWER.

A. "THE BUDDHISTS DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS FORMULA, WHICH SEEMS TO ME USELESS AND INSUFFICIENT.

Q. "WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE ACTION OF GENERAL KY?

A. "NOTHING HAS CHANGED BETWEEN KY AND MYSELF. WE ARE BOTH SOLDIERS. BUT AFTER EVERYTHING HE DID TO THE BUDDHISTS IN 1966 . . . THE BUDDHISTS AND ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE SOUTH HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN. WE NOW NEED A GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE MASSES AND OF EVERYBODY: THE BUDDHISTS, THE CATHOLICS, THE OTHER RELIGIONS AND THE ARMY.

Q. "WHAT SHOULD BE THE ROLE OF THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMY?

A. "THE ARMY HAS A ROLE TO PLAY IN THE RESTAURATION OF PEACE: REESTABLISH ORDER AND MAINTAIN SECURITY. BUT ITS CONFIDENCE MUST BE RETURNED TO IT AND COMMAND MUST BE CHANGED. OUR ARMY IS GOOD, IT HAS PROVEN ITSELF. BUT IT HAS LOST ALL ITS MORALE BECAUSE IT IS BADLY COMMANDED; PRESIDENT THIEU MUST LEAVE.

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"(AND WITHOUT BEING ASKED, THE GENERAL CONCLUDED:) FRANCE CAN AND MUST PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE REESTABLISHMENT OF PEACE. SHE IS ON GOOD TERMS WITH MOSCOW AND PEKING; SHE HAS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH HANOI, AND THERE IS A PRG DELEGATION IN PARIS."

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